

## **WITCHWEED**

### **PROGRAM PROFILE**

<b>Goal</b>	To continue witchweed eradication efforts and provide survey resources to substantiate that eradication has been accomplished.
<b>Enabling Legislation</b>	7 USC 147; PL 78-425.
<b>Economic Significance</b>	If witchweed is allowed to spread into the corn belt, it would cause an estimated 10-percent yield loss of the \$20 billion corn and sorghum crop in the United States.
<b>Principal Approach And Methods Used to Achieve Goals</b>	Survey, control, and regulatory. Program treatments include herbicides, soil fumigation, and ethylene gas, which stimulates seed germination in the absence of a host plant. Surveys to provide information on the status of witchweed and regulatory activities associated with infestations assure that agricultural commodities in the U. S. are not restricted in the global marketplace.
<b>History</b>	Witchweed was found in 1956 in North Carolina and South Carolina. Program began in 1957. Since then, witchweed has been discovered in 39 counties in those States. At one time, over 425,000 acres were infested. Since October 1995, the North Carolina Department of Agriculture has been the lead agency for all witchweed eradication activities in that State. Through a cooperative agreement, APHIS provides funds, technical guidance, and oversight to monitor the program's progress. In South Carolina, APHIS continues to function as the lead agency due to the limited number of infested acres in that State.
<b>State and Local Cooperation</b>	In North Carolina, APHIS has transferred the responsibility for eradication to the North Carolina Department of Agriculture. APHIS will continue providing the financial and technological support to allow the State to complete the eradication of infested acres, conduct post-eradication surveys, and treat new infestations when detected. In South Carolina, APHIS is responsible for eradicating the remaining infested acres. APHIS will continue providing financial support

to both States for surveys to verify eradication and treat new infestations found during these surveys.

**Involvement of Other Agencies**

Agricultural Research Service, Agricultural Marketing Service, the Extension Service, and the Cooperative State Research Service provide assistance.

**RESOURCE DATA**

-----Obligations-----

	<u>Direct</u>	<u>Reimbursement</u>	<u>User Fees</u>	<u>Staff-Years</u>
FY 1997	\$1,704,790	--	--	8
FY 1998	\$1,661,611	--	--	3
FY 1999	\$1,522,785	--	--	4
FY 2000 (est.)	\$1,506,000	--	--	4
FY 2001 (est.)	\$1,506,000	--	--	4

	<u>APHIS</u>	<u>Coop</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>CCC</u>	<u>Contingency Fund</u>
Cum.	\$144,942,462	\$6,763,725	\$151,706,187		

**RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

**Eradication Progress**

The Witchweed Eradication Project is a cooperative project involving APHIS, the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and the South Carolina Department of Plant Industry. In North Carolina, APHIS transferred the responsibility for eradication to the State. APHIS will continue providing the financial and technological support to allow the State to complete the eradication of infested acres, conduct post-eradication surveys, and treat new infestations when detected. In South Carolina, APHIS is responsible for eradicating the remaining infested acres. APHIS will continue providing financial support to both States for surveys to verify eradication and treat new infestations found during these surveys. Surveys to provide information on the status of witchweed and regulatory activities associated with infestations assure

that agricultural commodities in the United States are not restricted in the global marketplace.

State/Federal cooperative efforts continued moving the program toward eradication. As the program approaches total eradication, it becomes increasingly difficult to eradicate acres. By the end of the 1999 season, the project reduced the original infestation by 99 percent from nearly 500,000 acres in 1958 to 5,540 acres. During FY 1999 alone, infested acreage was reduced by 28 percent with the eradication of 2,170 acres. With the elimination of witchweed from known infested sites in North Carolina and South Carolina, both States will continue participating in ongoing field surveys to monitor the effectiveness of eradication. Conversely, if witchweed were allowed to spread into the corn belt, it would cause an estimated 10-percent yield loss of the \$20 billion corn and sorghum crop in the United States.